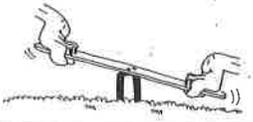


# Home & School CONNECTION<sup>®</sup>

Working Together for School Success

Cougar Ridge Elementary School  
Ms. Lisa Cordier, School Counselor



## SHORT NOTES

### Excellent attendance

Being in school every day means your child won't miss out on learning. Try to schedule appointments and family trips outside of school hours. If he asks to stay home "just because," remind him of what he'll miss, such as his reading group or PE class. Explain that he can be absent only if he's sick or if there's a family emergency.

## DID YOU KNOW?

Children who regularly eat meals with their families tend to do better in school and avoid risky behavior. Eating dinner together is great, but other meals count, too. If you work at night, maybe you could make time for a family breakfast. Or on a weekend, try a picnic lunch.

### Celebrate progress

Suggest that your youngster create a fun reminder of all the things she has accomplished. Let her cover a box with construction paper and label it "I did it!" Then, she can write each success ("I learned to add fractions") on a slip of paper and put it in the box. If she's feeling discouraged, have her read the slips.

### Worth quoting

"The best way to cheer yourself up is to try to cheer somebody else up!"  
Mark Twain

## JUST FOR FUN

**Q:** Can a kangaroo jump higher than the Empire State Building?

**A:** Of course. The Empire State Building can't jump!



## Conversations about school

When you think of parent involvement, do you picture moms and dads volunteering in classrooms? That's one way to help—but research shows that supporting your child's education at home is even more important. Here are conversations starters that will help you stay involved.



### "Let's see what you brought home."

Look at completed work to find out what your youngster is learning and how well she's doing. You could comment on her math work or social studies project, for instance. ("You know a lot about our state's history!") Also, respond to notes from her teacher, and sign her weekly folder or daily planner if required.

### "Show me what you have for homework."

It's your child's job to do her homework, but you play a role, too. Make sure she knows what she's supposed to do by having her explain the assignments to you. After she finishes her homework, glance over the work to see that it's complete.

### "Describe a book you enjoyed today."

This gives you an idea of what your youngster prefers to read. Then, build a daily reading habit by asking what she'd like to read tonight. Encourage her reading and listening skills by reading aloud to her and letting her read to you.

### "Tell me what you learned that you'd like to know more about."

Use her interests as jumping-off points for activities to share. If she likes geometry, you might hunt for

shapes together. If she's fascinated by how animals adapt to winter, take her to the library to research the subject or to the zoo to see live animals.♥

## After-school questions

Asking "How was school today?" might not get you far. Instead, ask questions like these for a better picture of your youngster's day:

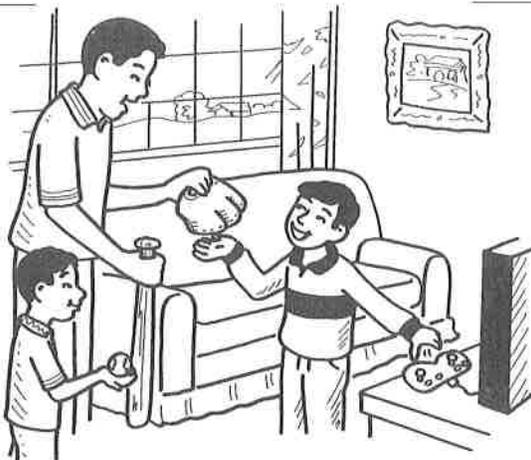
- "What's the coolest thing that happened? What wasn't so cool?"
- "Pretend you're the teacher. How would you describe the day?"
- "What made you laugh?"
- "What was the most creative thing you did?"
- "How were you kind or helpful today? Was anyone kind or helpful to you?" ♥



# What does respect look like?

Your youngster's daily dealings with adults and kids alike will be more pleasant if he speaks and acts respectfully. Try these tips for helping him learn about respect.

**Respectful replies.** Think about something that you and your youngster disagree on (say, whether his video game time should be limited). Model having a respectful discussion about it. You might say that his brain and body are growing and that he needs to run and play to stay healthy. Then, suggest a respectful response, such



as, "I want to be healthy, but I love video games." Have him brainstorm other situations where people have different opinions but still speak to each other with respect.

**Everyday acts.** When you mow the lawn or clean up after your dog, you can teach your child about respect for neighbors.

Explain that keeping your neighborhood clean and neat makes it nice for everyone. Ask him to think of other respectful things neighbors should do. If you share an apartment laundry room, he might say that you respect neighbors' time by removing your clothes when they're done so others get to use the washers and dryers.♥

## A reading challenge

By reading more complex books, your child can learn new words, facts, and ideas. He'll also be exposed to more complicated plots and will grow as a reader. Share these suggestions:

- Knowing something about the topic or setting makes a tougher book easier to comprehend. If your youngster is reading a novel set in China, he could talk to someone who has been there or look up the country online (try a children's site like *kids.nationalgeographic.com*).



- Encourage your child to look at a simpler book on the same subject. A picture-book biography about Harriet Tubman may help your youngster better understand a textbook chapter on the civil rights movement, for instance.

- Suggest that your child read complicated material with pencil and paper in hand. He can jot down questions, words to look up, or facts he wants to learn more about.♥

## School Supplies

If you need any extra School supplies, please reach out to me and let me know how I can support you child. We have extra backpacks & supplies to start the year off right!



## Strong study habits

**Q:** My third grader has to spend more time studying this year. How can I make sure she studies effectively?

**A:** Set your daughter up for success by helping her find a distraction-free study spot. Also, have her come up with a study routine. For instance, she could reserve time each evening to review her textbook and notes in the days leading up to a test.

Also, many students find it helpful to jot down a purpose each time they study. Your child might write: "I will learn the definitions of all the boldfaced words in chapter 7, section 1."

Finally, encourage her to experiment with study strategies to find what works best. She could close his eyes and imagine how a word is spelled or draw a grid with 9 squares to solve 3 x 3. Or she might find it helpful to spell or recite math facts aloud in rhythm or to a familiar tune.♥



## PARENT TO PARENT

## Talking to Your Kids about Responsibility

Kids learn the best lessons when they are given a task and allowed to make their own choices—and to fail. Having raised 3 boys, I can tell you this can be so hard to do. It is a natural response to want our children to be successful in everything they do. However, children learn Self-confidence by solving their own problems and trying again when they fail. What greater gift could parents give their children than the opportunity to be responsible, productive, and joyful in their adult life?

Many students feel anxious either from changing schools, classrooms, a new teacher, or being separated from parents.

As a parent it can be stressful and challenging to see your child adapt to these changes.

Try some of these fun books that may touch on the issues you see your child struggling with:

1. Second Grade Holdout by Audrey Vernick
2. I Don't Want to go to School by Nancy Pando & Kathy Voer
3. The Invisible String by Patrice Karst & Geoff Stevenson
4. Wilma Jean the Worry Machine by Julia Cook

Back to School Transition Books